

M. SHKAPSKAYA



Actually Happened

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IT ACTUALLY
HAPPENED

A Book of Facts



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FROM THE PUBLISHERS

THE AUTHOR, M. Shkapskaya, has not invented anything in this little booklet. She has simply selected a few facts from among the many incidents of unheard of fascist brutality towards children.

The mass murder, torture and the shooting of children, the turning of them into targets for machine guns and automatic rifles, the throwing out of tiny infants into the cold and countless other methods of exterminating children have become a system in the fascist army of robbers and cutthroats.

Orders and decrees of the German High Command sanction these brutalities, which are the outcome of the ethics of cannibals: "Kill all who are against us, kill, kill!" (Goering.)

In the "Handbook for the German Soldier," sanctioned by Hitler, we read:

"Stamp out of your soul all feeling of pity or compassion, kill every Russian, every Soviet citizen. Do not falter even though an old man or

woman, a girl or a boy stands before you."

Further on in this monstrous document, in a secret letter to all company commanders in the German army, Goebbels writes:

"It is necessary to inculcate a feeling of pitilessness into the German soldier. No manifestation of softheartedness in relation to anyone whomsoever, regardless of sex or age is admissible."

The Commander of the 13th Army Corps, in his order of November 29, 1941, is more concrete. "Exterminate all boys and girls of from 12 to 16 years of age."

The naked face of fascism and its bloody deeds are disclosed in this little booklet. All progressive mankind ought to be informed of the barbarity practised on children by these modern cannibals. All who love and cherish the lives of their own children ought to know about these facts and to assist to the utmost in the rapid annihilation of fascism—that sower of death and destruction.

"... Such dead raise
millions of the living. . . "

CHILDREN TOLD THESE STORIES THEMSELVES

SKETCHES

"IN THE hut where Petya lived the Germans were cooking dinner. Petya ate a piece of their meat and one potato. For this the Germans burned him alive. Zina Petushkova was walking along the street when she saw some Germans with an open box of sweets. She was five years old. She did not know what the Germans were like and she ate one of the sweets. The Germans killed her for it. In revenge Zina's brother, Kolya, set fire to the hut where the Germans were billeted. In the morning the fascists hung the whole of Zina's family—six persons. In our village they hanged everybody they could catch. They kindled bonfires under the feet of their victims."

This was written by Leda Ryabtseva, from the village of Yugorovo, Moscow region. She enclosed some sketches with her letter: Two Germans in green uniform throwing a boy into a red-hot stove.

Germans shooting a little girl with revolvers. On the child's breast a red patch—blood. People hanging on trees—men, women, children. Each is marked with a cross. Under each cross is carefully written: mother, Evgeniya Fedorovna, age 40; daughter Anya, age 17; daughter Vera, age 15; son Kolya, age 13; Tassya, age 7; Tolya age 2.

A LETTER

"Papa, they've taken Mama away. Papa, the fascists seize the tiniest, tiniest babies, throw them up in the air and then let them drop on to their bayonets."

Such was the letter sent to the Front to Red Armyman Khromykh by his little son Lenya.

THE UNCLE IN THE TANK

"A tank was lumbering along our street. Suddenly it stopped—something was out of order. I saw two fascists crawl out, both in black, with the skull and crossbones on their sleeves. One began to repair the machine; the other entered a neighbouring house, opened the cupboard, rummaged around and found some bread. He sat down at the table and began to

eat. A neighbour's four-year-old boy came in and said:

"Uncle, give me a bit."

"The German paid no attention. Then the youngster seized a piece of bread himself from the table. At that the German picked up a spanner and hit the child with all his might, smashing in his skull. The boy fell to the floor, but the German calmly went on eating. When the bread was finished he left the hut."

This incident was witnessed by Vitya Bessonov in Klin.

THE HIGHWAY

"It was very difficult for us to get away from our native town because of the Germans. We walked along the Bezhetsky Highway. The German airplanes rained bullets on us from machine-guns. They killed many women, children and old people. The women staggered with fatigue and the children hung on to their mothers' skirts, crying."

This composition was written by Klava Chizhova, a pupil of School No. 6, Kalinin.

THESE CHILDREN ARE NOW INMATES OF THE
RUSSAKOV HOSPITAL, MOSCOW

THAT DREADFUL NIGHT

THERE were five of them when Zoya Feoktistova left her native village, Spaso-Pomazkin, near Volokolamsk, from which they were driven out by the Germans. Her mother carried the two boys of two and three. Ten-year-old Zoya took the baby—he was about as much as she could carry.

It was a bitterly cold night, about 15 degrees below zero. On such a night people usually sit at home by the stove. . . .

In Zoya's home, too, there was a warmly heated stove. The children were already asleep when the Germans arrived and ordered them to clear out.

Zoya and her mother knew that it would be worse than useless to make any kind of request, so they left without a word.

The sky was rent by the flashes of bursting shells. The wind almost blew them off their feet. The mother walked heavily, bent under her double load. Zoya's hands grew numb, while the baby was strangely quiet.

"Mama, my hands hurt me so!" wailed Zoya.

The mother said nothing, but continued on her way. She understood what that meant. . . .

"Mama, I'm dropping him. I can't hold him any longer!" screamed Zoya in agony.

And the mother replied in a heavy, muffled voice:

"Throw him into the snow."

"Mama, but he'll die!" screamed the child in terror.

"Throw him into the snow," repeated the mother, moving more and more slowly, with ever greater difficulty. She had to make a choice between two of her children. She had done so.

"But I laid him down in the snow," said the little girl, choking with tears. "No, I didn't throw him, I laid him down ever so gently."

The baby had not made a sound, yet it seemed to her that she could hear him crying louder and louder. Perhaps it was only a ringing in her ears. She put her hands up to her head and ran on. Behind her came her mother, plodding along heavily.

Then a shell burst so near them that it killed all three—the mother and both boys. Death had been kinder to her than the Hitlerites; it had taken her with both sons. There would be no need for her to choose a second time. Zoya remained alone in the wild night.

"They cut off my fingers, they did, those who fired that shell," she said bitterly like a grown-up, looking at her maimed hands.

AN ILLUSTRATION FROM HISTORY

Both of Sima Malkina's eyes are lively and dark, but she can see with only one of them. All her face, from the eyes downward, is swathed in white bandages like a mask.

People, unaccustomed to such sights, draw back aghast when the doctor removes that mask. Where the cheeks were is a dreadful hole; the lips are mutilated. A piece of shrapnel went in at one side of her face and came out at the other, smashing the tongue.

She tries to speak, but it is difficult to understand her. It is a good thing that she is able to write; and when speech fails her she takes up her pencil.

Sima comes from Novo-Alexandrovka, near Volokolamsk. On January 16, the Germans retreated.

The majority of the houses were burnt by them and the population was driven to the rear.

Wounded Red Army men were lying in the house belonging to Sima's parents, and women and children had gathered to warm themselves. The last shots had been fired and our men were entering the village.

Where that last remaining fascist could have been hiding, it is impossible to imagine. It is difficult to say whether he intended to go with the rest but was left behind, or whether he remained on purpose, in order to carry out some hellish scheme. At any rate, our men had just "stopped the battle," to use Sima's own expression, when this fascist seized a grenade and hurled it into the house right into the midst of the wounded and the children.

"He wasn't even wounded," said the little girl; "he was killed by our men."

And from the burning house the dead and wounded, the Red Army men and the children were carried.

Little Sima wants to tell us something more, but we can't make out what. The nurse comes to our assistance.

"Most of all I love history," she interprets for her. "I knew about the Germans—we read about Alexander Nevsky in class—but I never thought that I'd have to fight against them myself."

SISTERS

Beside the window in one of the wards stand two cots. In them lie two sisters—Luba Chickina, eight years old and Lidochka who is five.

They were brought to the ward at different times and were overjoyed to be together again. That is to say, Luba was overjoyed, for Lidochka almost never speaks, she suffers too much.

When the Germans entered the village of Oskol, Volokolamsk district they set fire to almost all the houses. The children gathered at the school. They knew that the school is a place where children are looked after.

The school children brought along their little brothers and sisters. Luba had been attending school for only two weeks. She led Lidochka by the hand and said to her in a motherly way:

"Don't be afraid, Lidochka, it's nice at school."

After the children came the old women, and then the mothers with infants in their arms. The janitor had heated the stoves well—outside it was 40 degrees below zero. The children lay huddled together, worn out with sobbing, homeless and chilled to the bone. Soon they dropped off to sleep. Outside it was a pitch dark, icy, still night.

The silence was broken by the sound of a German detachment marching. An abrupt knock at the door, shuffling steps in the entrance, rough voices giving orders. The order was terse and blunt:

"Russians, get out!"

The children wept, entreated. They took these murderers by the hand, by the topboot. They refused to go out into the dreadful black night. There were no other buildings left in the village. The adults had been driven away already and the nearest village was two kilometres off.

The officer repeated: "Russians, get out!"

"Then they whipped out their revolvers and began to shoot," broke in Luba with excitement.

Suddenly Lidochka, who so far had lain motionless, began to stir: "Began to shoot," she lisped in a whisper, her eyes wide open.

The children fled from the school in terror. The sisters lost one another, lost their mother with her infant in her arms.

"I followed the others," said Luba, "but my feet grew sore and I sat down by the roadside. Everyone passed on and I was left behind. I sat there and cried. I don't remember what happened after that."

But Lidochka did not follow the others. She was afraid of the dark, and she was barefoot. While

half-asleep, she had forgotten her boots by the stove. She groped her way to the school steps and hid underneath. Everyone had gone. The door was closed. Wind and snow swept over the child. Both children were discovered by our Red Armymen.

"I'm all right," boasted Luba, "only my heel and toes have fallen off. But all the same I shall be able to walk."

"But Lidochka is much worse," whispered the nurse to me, setting the quilt to rights.

In the cot cowered all that remained of a human body. There were neither hands, nor feet, just a pale, transparent little face with a pair of large eyes. The child lies quiet, ever so quiet. It hurts her to move. She groans when someone walks on the floor planks near her bed and shakes it. On those days when her wounds are dressed she cries pitifully. The teacher who gives the children lessons in the ward always stops teaching at these times and goes out. The child's agony is too dreadful to listen to. And even now, at the mere mention of the terrible word "bandage" the child trembles and whispers:

"Please don't, my feet are quite dry."

But the little feet are not dry. Too long she lay with them in the snow. Such wounds are not quick to heal.

The nurse who is accustomed to all things, silently tucks in the child and turns away.

ONCE UPON A TIME...

Zhenya Sokolov lived near Rzhev. That day he was waiting for the battle to finish so that he could run to the well for water. Life was going on much as before: his father had gone off to the forest, but he was taking his place at home.

He had scarcely left the house when a machine-gun fired at him. One bullet entered his chest.

"At first it didn't hurt a bit, then it began to burn and grew sore, ever so sore, and suddenly I wanted a drink and I hadn't even brought the water."

Now Zhenya is convalescent, but from loss of blood he is still very weak and walks with difficulty. His face is absolutely colourless. About himself and what he used to do he speaks as of something far away, beyond recall, that will never be repeated.

"Once upon a time I studied at school. . . . Once upon a time I read quite well. . . ."

He complains that he has forgotten everything—all the grammar rules and all the multiplication tables.

"Even my handwriting has changed—grown bad."

And he wants to write very much. He is trying to find his mother. Perhaps she has been killed, but

perhaps she is still safe and sound. How is he to find out? That is what is troubling him all the time.

"Our central post-office is in the village which the Germans are still holding," he sighs.

Suddenly his eyes light up: newspapers are being brought into the ward.

"Maybe our Red Army men have taken the post-office back today?..."

ON ALL FOURS

When the Germans bombed Mantrovo, Galya Bobrova's native village, her little four-year-old brother was killed and she herself wounded in the spine.

At first she did not as much as notice her wound. Her little brother lay before her on the bench with a crushed-in skull, his brain sticking out through the hole. Blood was running from the wound onto the floor, and all over the bed. His little face grew blue, then deathly and soon he ceased to breathe. And only a few minutes before he had been laughing merrily. . . .

When Galya talks about something, no matter what, her thoughts always return to those terrible minutes: apparently she will never forget them, not even when she is an old, grey-haired woman.

But that was only Galya's first ordeal.

The fascists entered the village. They tried to drive the villagers into the German rear, but the latter had no desire to go. They dug pits and hid themselves in them. During bombardments Galya's father carried her into one of these pits, for the wounded girl was unable to walk.

One day, when Soviet units were approaching, the Germans ordered all the inhabitants to prepare for immediate departure. A few people managed to hide themselves in a bathhouse on the outskirts of the village. Galya's father dragged the girl there, panting under his load, for she was fourteen years old and heavy for her age, though she had grown thin of late.

The German units were retreating in hot haste. Passing by the bathhouse they heard people moving inside. They turned an automatic rifle on the bathhouse at random, without even looking. Galya's father dropped noiselessly with a bullet through his heart.

"Why didn't they kill me and not Papa! I'm crippled anyway!" exclaimed Galya, bursting into tears. She always cries when she speaks about Papa.

The Soviet units had not yet come up, but the villagers could not wait any longer, and went out to meet the Red Army that night. Galya's mother carried

the baby. Galya went too, but she couldn't walk. She crawled, crawled on all fours.

"I would have crawled on all fours round the whole world only to reach our Red Army," she repeated, pressing her hands to her breast.

She lost sight of the rest of her family that night on the road. Where they are now she does not know.

GREEN PASTURES

Twelve-year-old Vasya Nosikov, from the village of Nikonovo, near Kalinin, witnessed a well-nigh unbelievable thing.

The Germans wanted to find out whether their suspicion was correct that a certain field was mined. What they should have done, of course, would have been to send out a party of sappers, but what they actually did was something quite different.

Now it happened that at this time a large group of villagers were being gathered together to be packed off to the German rear. By increasing the number of their so-called "prisoners of war" in this way, the Germans procured much additional free labour power. The men usually managed to escape to the forest, but the women, children and old folks remained. The entire remaining population of three villages, Yushino, Nikonovo and Pyankovo, had been

collected, horses harnessed, goods and chattels loaded onto carts and the children hoisted up on top.

The crowd moved on its way but scarcely had they reached the bank of the Volga when they were turned aside from the highroad. The whole procession scattered over the green pastures.

Vasya was with his mother and elder sister Manya. On top of the cart beside them sat their neighbour's four-year-old Ledochka.

There was a violent and unexpected explosion. While he was falling, Vasya saw the cart tossed up into the air as if by magic. Ledochka came down near him, her stomach ripped wide open.

When he came to, the green pastures had turned into a battlefield. Horses were neighing, corpses lay scattered here and there, the injured were groaning. These who endeavoured to run off were mown down by automatic rifles, so that there was an enormous number of killed and wounded. Only about one-sixth of the villagers survived.

Vasya's legs pained him dreadfully. He took a look. They were hanging on by bits of skin.

"My legs are done for," he groaned, but added at once: "but what of it. They'll find some way out."

He was a man! He knew that he must not be faint hearted!

NO LUCK!

When the Germans occupied the village of Khvorostinino near Volokolamsk, they drove the villagers out of their huts as usual. Thirteen-year-old Tolya Sobolev was chased into the cold with rags bound round his feet, for the Germans had taken away his felt boots. He was hit by a piece of shrapnel but wandered on with his bloodstained shirt sticking to his little body. After a while he ran across a deserted dugout and for seven days he sat there alone, like a caveman.

In the dugout he found nothing but a bare board on which he slept, pressing his body down on the hard wood to keep it warm. Fortunately a blizzard started, the trench filled up with snow and was transformed into a snow-drift. The snow kept the cold out a little.

The snow served Tolya for food and drink. In his pocket he discovered a piece of oil-cake which had been intended for the cow, but the cow had disappeared long ago, together with Tolya's home.

Once, when Tolya managed to drag himself out of his shelter, he found out that the entire village had disappeared too. Life disappears wherever the fascists set foot. Everything was covered with deep snow and

all around there was shooting. A fierce battle was raging. Our Red Army men were fighting for their native land.

"And for me too," thought Tolya.

Tolya tried to keep moving. He rubbed his benumbed legs by the hour. Then he would fall asleep only to wake up and then to fall asleep again. Time dragged on. When eventually the guns grew silent, he crept out but, to his sorrow, he was seized by the German detachment left to cover their rear as they were retreating.

"You are a partisan," they said, and drove him to their rear. As before, Tolya's feet were wrapped in rags. He marched along, his poor, frozen feet barely touching the ground. His strength was giving out.

On the road he was hit again, this time in the left arm. He lost more blood and grew still weaker. When they halted for the night, his frozen toes fell off. But this was not the end of his misery. In the morning he was driven out of the hut and on to the road again—to resume the march. . . .

When Tolya comes to this part of his story his voice always breaks a little and he says:

"Then I thought about only one thing—how really lucky are the ones who are killed outright! But I had no luck!"

The Germans were driving a big crowd of what they call "prisoners of war" before them. The Soviet units were fighting to recapture the village and the Germans drove the villagers right under the deadly fire.

In the next village Tolya's suffering was considerably lessened, for he managed to separate from the crowd and hide in a hut. There he was given food and shelter.

FEKOLKA

The fascist fired at little Nina Kiselyeva from a machine-gun when she and her Mama were running away to the forest.

She had looked back, and a bullet got her full in the face, smashing her jaw bone.

"Now, just why did you look back!" her mother repeated over and over again. Why did she look back? The reason was very simple—she had wanted to have a last look at her beloved Fekolka, the calf, just a few days old, which had such a velvety mouth and such trustful eyes.

Although wounded, she and her mother managed to crawl away from the enemy, but another calamity overtook them. The frost caught them. The cold was

too severe for Nina. She had to forfeit her toes.—They were left on the operating table!

"And how shall I be able to look after Fekolka when she grows big and goes out to grass?" she enquires looking thoughtfully at her poor little bandaged feet.

BY MYSELF

Five-year-old Valya Bashlikova comes from the village of Chernaya, Moscow district. She is able to sit up in her cot now, all by herself. She eats her soup by herself, and her egg—eats slowly, carefully, with hands as yet not too steady. She is still weak from loss of blood and her face is absolutely transparent.

She, too, was chased out into the frost without boots. Her mother begged that the child be allowed to remain in the hut, but her request was answered by a blow from a rifle butt.

Valya draws the blankets off her legs herself. She likes to do everything herself. Instead of feet one sees two bandaged stumps.

Seriously, without the trace of a smile, the child says to the nurse:

"And they'll make boots for me and I'll walk, walk all by myself, won't I, nurse?" She raises her large,

sad eyes to the nurse's face. "I will walk, won't I, nurse?"

"Why, of course you will, my dear," replies the nurse in a voice just a shade too bright and cheerful, perhaps ... and turns away.

NEVER OR EVER?

Vanya Gromov's village was Novinky, Volokolamsk district. When winter set in, Novinky was right on the front line and Vanya saw the first enemy attack. The Germans marched, drawn up to full height, endeavouring to create panic in the ranks of the Soviet troops by their brazen defiance.

When two Soviet signallers fell wounded, Vanya dragged them out of the line of fire and bound up their wounds, took them to the medical station and returned.

Soviet rearguards were covering the retreat of our troops and when they in their turn withdrew Vanya discovered one more wounded man. While he was bandaging him, the Germans entered the village and Vanya was taken as a prisoner of war to Nazi Headquarters.

They shoved him into a hut where there were two officers, an interpreter and three other mili-

tary men. In the corner by the stove sat the old housewife.

Vanya was asked whether he were a soldier, or perhaps a communist. Smiling he answered that in the Soviet Union neither the army nor the Party accept minors into their ranks. After a brief cross-examination the old woman was ordered out of the room and the officer moved the table into the middle. Vanya decided that he was about to be hanged, but the officer said in broken Russian:

"Sleep, sleep!" and laid his head upon his arms.

"That means they are not going to hang me," thought Vanya, and lay down on the table.

The officer took off his belt, moved Vanya's legs and bound them fast to the legs of the table. The belt was not long enough, so he took another one from the interpreter and a third from someone else. He stretched out the boy's arms and bound them. Then he sat down to smoke. When the boy moved he shouted at him.

Vanya lay and watched his tormentors. His gaze must have been fearful for one of the fascists, covering his eyes with one hand and threatening him with his finger said: "Don't look," and went out into the yard. In a few minutes he returned, carrying a smith's hand-saw. Again he cried: "Russ, don't look!"

But Vanya continued to look. His boyish pride did not permit him to close his eyes. His head was hanging over the edge of the table, his arms were swollen, but he went on looking.

The Germans, all the six of them, crowded around the tightly bound child, laughing. One straightened out Vanya's wounded arm and the boy felt the cold sharp steel on his skin.

"They had already begun to saw, but still I couldn't believe it," he said. "I couldn't believe that they were capable of doing such a thing."

But they were capable of anything! Six full-grown men, smoking and laughing, sawed off the boy's hand.

Vanya does not remember whether he screamed or not. "Perhaps I did not even scream, for when they began to saw through the flesh I lost consciousness," he said.

When he came to, the hut was deserted. He was lying on the floor in a pool of blood. Beside him knelt a Russian ambulance man, tenderly stroking his damp head and repeating over and over again:

"It's nothing, sonny. Don't lose heart, I've bound it tight so it'll hold."

Vanya thought he was among his own folk again, that he had been rescued, but it turned out it that the

ambulance man was also a "prisoner of war" who had remained in the village with the seriously injured. He had been called in to bandage Vanya's arm. The hand had been sawn right off.

"Do you know, they laughed," the ambulance man told Vanya. "They said 'no more soldier—no more—never: shoot—no more—never: fight—no more—never.'"

"We'll see about that," said the boy, "never or ever, the last word's mine," and he again lost consciousness.

After three weeks Vanya escaped from the fascists and returned home to his mother. While living in the village with his festering arm he still managed to help the partisans. When the Red Army recaptured the village he was removed to hospital. Now his arm is getting better.

"Just as soon as the new skin grows I'm going to the front again," he announced, firmly. "I have already learned to shoot with my left hand, and as a scout I'll do at any rate. Now we shall see. Never or ever!"

THIS IS CONFIRMED BY THOUSANDS OF WITNESSES

LET THE DEAD ARISE!

THE boys were playing that old, old game, the game of war. Breathlessly they were trying to knock one another down and, if the enemy refused to fall, they said it wasn't the game and grew angry. The game finished with all but the commander being killed off. The commander looked around, wiped the sweat from his brow, and then suddenly cried:

"Let the dead arise! Our country demands it!"

All the children got to their feet and scattered to reorganize into new formations.

"Where did you hear that?" asked the commander's mother smiling, putting her little son to bed. She was the school teacher, Kustanovich, from Petrakovo.

"All the boys are playing that game now," answered the child. Tired out with "war" the child fell fast asleep as soon as his head touched the pillow.

And then real war began. Guns barked in the streets, now and then came shots, the neighbour's house was burned to the ground. A little after midnight, the front door banged. There was the sound of heavy steps. The Germans entered. The boy woke up at once, screamed and seized hold of his mother. She stood there with a face like a ghost, pressing her child close to her breast.

"Walk ahead and show us where the commanders are."

"I do not know," announced the teacher, and pressed her boy still more closely to herself.

She was pushed out by force into the street. The house opposite was on fire, the flames rising to the sky.

"If you don't show us where they are, I'll throw your boy into the fire," said the officer, in German.

The teacher knew German well, but it seemed to her that she had not understood. The officer repeated, slowly and distinctly:

"I'll throw your boy into the fire."

This time she understood only too well and convulsively gripped her boy. He began to cry. The flames rose higher. The officer waited for an answer.

"I don't know," replied the mother quietly.

The officer seized the child and threw him into the flames. The mother began to scream hysterically

so that several women lost their reason. The Nazi fiends held her back while the child burned to death, lest she should throw herself to his assistance.

Then they shot her.

"Why did she shout: 'Let the dead arise!'" enquired one woman of another, after the execution. "I don't know," was the answer. "The dead will not rise, but such dead raise millions of the living!"

FOR FATHER'S SAKE

On the Bogdanovka farm, in the Tula region, there lives an old, blind man. When Savva Golovinivsky, a writer, arrived there after the Germans had been driven out of that part of the country, the old man told him the story of his little granddaughter.

The child was a mere baby, not yet three. She was just beginning to talk.

She was in her mother's arms when a Finnish fascist soldier came into their cottage. She smiled and stretched out her hands to the newcomer.

This Finn spoke excellent Russian.

"And where is your Papa?" he asked.

"Fighting the fascists," without a moment's hesitation answered the mite.

The fascist seized the tiny tot by the legs, and bashed the little head against the corner of the stove.

SHURIK

In a village, near Tula, the Germans had taken up their billets in the house of Sadomova, a collective farm woman. The frost was very severe and Sadomova heated the stove every day as hot as she could, but nevertheless by morning the house was always chilly.

She had a three-year-old boy, Shurik. One evening, towards bedtime, the child grew fretful. The terrified mother tried as best she could to quiet him, but the child's cries grew louder and louder.

Then one of the Nazis went up to the mother, snatched the child from her arms and hurled him out into snow just under the window. The terrible shrieks of the child could be heard all down the street. The frantic mother rushed to the door, but the fascist whipped out his revolver and forbade her to leave the house.

Shurik's cries could be heard for almost two hours. Then they ceased. Eventually, in some way, the mother managed to get out of the house. She took up her boy, kissed him, tears pouring down her cheeks.

"Shurik, Shurik, don't you hear me?" she wailed.

Shurik was still alive. With glazed eyes, his body stiff and lifeless, he looked up at his mother, but made no sound.

For eight days the poor woman tried to nurse her child back to life, but to no avail. On the ninth day he died.

YOUTHFUL HEROES

The Germans had retreated to the village of Rechitsa. On February 1, 1942 they decided to make a counter-attack on Budskye Vyselki. When their troops were already lined up, the order came to round up all the villagers. Messengers were sent out, tapping on the windows, catching people in the streets and chasing them to the outskirts of the village. Only the women, children and old folks had remained in the village. The children cried, pressing close up to their mothers, and the old people hobbled along with difficulty. Death threatened all who remained behind.

When all had been collected, they were ordered to line up in front of the German detachment and march forward to Budskye Vyselki, which had just been recaptured by Soviet troops. Behind, under cover of these unarmed people, crept the fascist detachment.

Those approaching could already see the Soviet trenches, and distinguish individuals, and the Red Armymen, amazed at the unusual spectacle of this bedraggled crowd, looked out, endeavouring to ascertain where these folk were going and why.

The women, the children and the old people had not exchanged a word on the road. They had walked in silence, but now, when but a few hundred paces were left between them and the Red Armymen, with one accord they shouted:

"Shoot! Shoot! The Germans are behind us."

Not a shot came from the Soviet side, but from the other side the infuriated fascists opened fire on the unarmed crowd.

Only when those villagers who escaped death had managed to get clear, did our Red Armymen begin the attack on the Nazis. They hurled themselves forward with such fury that the fascist detachment was completely exterminated.

After the battle the Red Armymen picked up those who had sacrificed their lives to secure victory for their own Soviet Army and tenderly carried them to the village. Amongst them were but two grown ups, the mothers Shishkina and Zhukovskaya.

On the grass lay victims such as no war has ever yet known: Nusha Yurkova, age 14; Genya Zhu-

kovsky, age 15; Valya Zhukovsky, age 13; and at the feet of the dead mother they laid the eight-month-old Yurochka Shishkin.

And the Red Army men bared their head in grief before these youthful heroes.

THE CATAPULT

The school house in Shinyano-Slobodsky, Smolensk region, had been taken over by the German Staff as its headquarters. That day, when the school-children were playing round about the school, the six-year-old Volodya Bobrov took out his catapult and began to shoot. By chance, a stone hit one of the school windows.

A staff-officer ran out so quickly that the children had no time even to get away, and the bewildered Volodya stood immovable, in terror watching the officer approach. He expected to get a good scolding, or even a beating.

But the fascist suddenly whipped open a knife. In a second Volodya lay, covered in blood, dead. Next his playmate fell alongside.

The fascists tied Volodya's catapult to the head of the dead child for the edification of all other children, and so he lay for several days—dead, with a catapult round his forehead.

A TWO-YEAR-OLD "DONNEUR"

Bitter fighting was going on in Luzhsky district, Leningrad region. The German casualties were heavy.

In order to save the lives of the sick or injured, blood transfusions are usually made in cases of severe hemorrhage. The blood for these transfusions is obtained from healthy people, whose blood answers to certain medical tests. People who give their blood for this purpose are called "donneurs." The blood and the giver are always carefully examined by medical experts, and blood is taken only at suitable intervals and in limited quantities. From minors up to eighteen years of age blood is not taken in general.

But the Germans began to take blood for transfusion to their wounded from children.

From the two-year-old Nadya Kuznetsova they took it four times. Her mother watched the child growing paler and paler after each operation. Then she grew blue, wax-like and her arms began to hang limply at her side.

"They have sucked all her blood," wept the mother. But the matter did not end at that. One day the German doctor came in and said:

"We intend to take some of your daughter's skin for our wounded."

"Take mine! Cut it all off, if you like, but don't touch my child," pleaded the mother, distraught by horror at the thought of renewed suffering for her child.

"No, we don't need yours: it won't do," answered the doctor. "Hers is just the very thing we need—soft and smooth like elastic."

Nadya cried and gripped her mother with her tiny, emaciated hands, but it was useless. She was snatched up, bound with straps and carried off.

The mother fainted. When she came to, she found her child alongside, but wet with blood and half dead. From her spine and chest ten pieces of skin had been cut off.

QUIETENED FOR GOOD

German soldiers were plundering the houses of the villagers of Lotoshok, Volinsky district, Orel region.

When these bandits burst into the house of the collective farm woman Khatina, she was nursing her eleven-month-old baby.

In an attempt to save at least some of her belongings, Khatina hurriedly laid the baby on the bed. It at once began to scream. And so did the mother, as she endeavoured to tug away a large woollen shawl from one of the robbers.

"Keep quiet, can't you?" shouted the sergeant, the leader of the plundering expedition, and struck her.

The terrified woman quietened down, but it was less easy to calm the screaming baby.

Then the fascist took hold of it and dashed its head against the wall. And so the child was quietened for good.

THE GRAVEYARD

"You are not Soviet citizens any more, but German subjects," the fascists told the inhabitants of the village of Dubrovka, Kursk region.

They were all led to the outskirts of the town. Several soldiers ran ahead and began to shoot at them from a machine-gun. There were many children in the crowd.

They finished off the wounded with their rifle butts. Others they burned. Into houses full of people they threw hand grenades.

Little Vitya Minnikov had been seriously wounded and lay unconscious. Taking a look at the child, one of the fascist soldiers suddenly began to laugh in an idiotic sort of way, and put a saucepan on to the child's head like a hat. The pan was small and fitted tightly. The soldier had to force it on, even banging the bottom of it.

After a while the wounded child regained consciousness and began to scream at the unbearable pain. Neighbours around wanted to help him to take off the pan and put a stop to this grim jest.

But the pan would not come off and, moreover, the fascists would not allow them to touch it. The louder the child screamed, the more aroused were the Nazis.

When the seventy-year-old man, grandfather Andryushenko, gave them a piece of his mind, they fired at him point blank.

Towards morning Vitya died. Grandfather Andryushenko had also bled to death. Maria Golubeva, who had been hit in the spine and afterwards had run about a mile around the potato fields carrying her child, had likewise passed away. So had her baby. The wounded everywhere—in the field, in the road, in the houses—had all died. Those who lay with open wounds had frozen to death. The village

had been turned into a graveyard. Only corpses could be made German subjects in the Soviet village.

Three days later Soviet troops entered Dubrovka. Our men went from house to house, dejected, grown sad, examining the dead, calling to the living. But they found no one alive.

Suddenly, they heard a faint rustling in one of the houses. Some tiny body was still breathing and moving on the stove. At the sound of voices the rustling ceased and all was still. Then our men began to call, to coax. Hearing the familiar mother tongue a small head peeped out from under a heap of rags. It was Vitya's little sister, Nina Minnikova. She had been wounded on the sole of her foot and, unable to run away, she had hidden like a mouse on the stove.

Nina was the sole survivor of all the inhabitants of Dubrovka.

THE TWENTY SECOND

It was June 22, a lovely warm, summer day. At the Pioneer Camp in the beautiful Lithuanian watering-place of Palanga there were about 2,000 children.

The usually jolly life of the camp was in full swing. The children were playing games, swimming,

romping about in the garden. Suddenly, like a bolt from the blue a German plane roared by.

Bombs dropped from above and found their mark. The children took cover wherever they could. But the bullets and shrapnel ferreted them out. They were hit in the forest, mown down around the house. In the very middle of the path Danute Zilute went down, with both her legs shot clean away. At the feet of seven-year-old Elza, crouched her sister, Marita. "Elza, let's run, run quick!" she urged in tears, pulling at her sister. But Elza could run no longer. She had been hit in the temple.

The first part of the buildings to burst into flames was the wing where the tiniest children were. The flames enveloped it so quickly that the little inmates had no time to get downstairs. Through the open windows they could be seen rushing about inside and reaching up to the windows.

They were afraid to jump from such a height, but as the flames and smoke crept upwards, they began to fling themselves one after the other through the open windows. However, only the older and more courageous children took this risk. The others who were left only wrung their hands in despair. "Jump quickly! You'll be burnt to death!" those outside cried up to them, waiting to catch them,

but it was too late. The roof caved in with a terrific thud and buried underneath it all who remained.

A tall tongue of fire leapt up above the house. Even the hissing and roaring of the fire could not drown that dreadful cry which was carried down to those standing below.

FROM FIRE INTO WATER

While retreating before the advancing Red Army, the Hitlerites set fire to the houses in the village of Myasoyedovo, Kursk region.

A wail went up from the village. Everyone began to run to save his belongings, let out the cattle, rescue the children. So intense was the heat given off by the flames on either side, it was impossible to pass down the street.

A collective farm woman had just returned from the field. On leaving home she had shut in her four little children and now she found her house was in flames. There was no time to open the door but, smashing a window pane, she rushed inside to save her children.

The two elder ones, who were standing near the window, stretched out their hands to her and she

seized them and carried them out into the street.

"Wait here. Don't run away. I'll be back in a second," she mumbled, calming them and rushing back to look for the two smallest, who still remained inside. Apparently they had been overcome by the smoke for there was no answer to her cries.

Just as she disappeared through the window, two German soldiers came up to the house. They grabbed the two children, who were standing crying, and dragged them to the river. There they threw them into a hole in the ice.

"If you don't like fire, try water," said one of them, cynically, as the children were being slowly dragged down under the ice.

TARGETS

In the village of Beli Rast, Krasnopolyanski region, a group of German soldiers placed the twelve-year-old Volodya Tkachov on the roof of a house as a target and opened fire on him from an automatic rifle. The boy was riddled with bullets.

In the village of Voskresensk, Dubinin region, the Hitlerites also used a still younger boy, a three-year-old one, as a target and shot at him with machine-guns.

NOT SINCE THE DAYS OF THE RUSSIAN PRINCE IGOR

The Germans had their billets in the village of Kholm, Moghilev region.

What they had demanded from Aksenova, the sixteen-year-old collective farm girl and why she had aroused their animosity, no one ever knew. But her execution was witnessed by all the villagers, and such barbarism had not been seen in those parts for more than one thousand years, since those ancient times when the Russian Prince Igor was executed. Children read about that nowadays in school.

The girl was taken to the forest not far from the village. The fascists chose two spruce trees standing a short distance one from the other. On the very top they threw a loop and bent the trees down with ropes to the ground.

Then they dragged the bound girl to the tree. She lay helpless on their arms, neither able to move nor to cry out, for she had been gagged.

She was laid on the ground. While several of the fascists held the trees with all their might, the remainder quickly fastened the girl's legs to the tops. They were bound tightly, firmly. Many times the rope was tested to see that there were no weak

places in it. When all was ready, the officer in charge of the execution waved his hand.

The trees, instantly released, swung back into position and the girl's body was torn in two.

GONE TO SCHOOL

Kerch is a beautiful, well-kept town, with a considerable population, at the foot of the Mitridat Hill.

A few days after the advent of the Germans an order of the German Command was hung up on the school doors proclaiming that all children must attend school.

In obedience to this order two hundred and forty-five mothers waked their little children early in the morning, collected books, copybooks and satchels and sent them off to school.

The streets were quiet by that time. All corpses had been removed. Nevertheless, many parents took their children to the school door themselves and bade them farewell on the very threshold.

The children ascended the staircase, somewhat excited and troubled as to how and what they would study under fascism. The parents returned home.

But in vain did they await the return of their children at the appointed hour. None of them returned home. In vain did they hammer on the locked school door. No one was there to open it. In vain did they rush along the streets, calling, weeping, imploring. No one knew anything of the fate of those missing children.

Later on they found them—but that was much later. Eight kilometres from the town, on the Väterovo Highway they lay in a deep hole—all the two-hundred and forty-five—dead.

THE FIRE

"Put straw around her and set her alight," said the fascists to Maria Maltzova, from the village of Donetz, Dolzhansky district, after binding her seventeen-year-old daughter.

The mother fainted.

Then the fascists put the straw round the girl themselves and set her alight.

On regaining consciousness, the mother rushed to the fire and dragged out her daughter. But the Germans battered the mother to death with the butt ends of their rifles, shot the girl and threw her back into the flames.

THREE OUT OF EIGHT

Kosygina, a member of a collective farm, was the mother of eight children.

In the Soviet Union not only do mothers of large families enjoy the high esteem of all, but the state, by giving them large grants of money, helps them to bring up their children.

That day all the children were sitting round the table. As usual, it was noisy and jolly. While the mother served up the soup, the children chattered and joked.

A German corporal happened to pass by just then and glanced in through the window. Seeing that happy family scene he threw in a hand grenade and followed this up by a round of shots from his automatic rifle.

Only three out of the eight survived—Kolya, Katya and Vasya.

PITY!

A large group of Nazis had broken into the house of the Kiselev family in the village of Kolitsyno, Lotoshin district, Moscow region.

Then came the brief order: "Get out!"

The owner of the house, Stepan Kiselev, pointing

to his little son and wife, said: "Where can we go? It's freezing hard outside."

The German sergeant repeated: "I said, get out!"

Then the whole family began to implore the fascists to let them remain.

"Let us stay overnight—at least; don't drive us into the cold! In the morning we will go," said the weeping mother.

The infuriated sergeant gave one of his men an order of some kind. The latter went out. Kiselev waited anxiously for the verdict. Perhaps they would take pity on them?

The soldier returned with a can of petrol.

"You are cold, are you? All right! We'll soon warm you up," he said. And he sprinkled them with petrol and threw a lighted match at them. Three burning torches rushed from room to room. The Germans left, locking the door after them.

The house began to burn. The neighbours noticed the fire and sounded the alarm. The collective farmers came rushing to extinguish the flames. From the house could be heard the most terrible shrieks of people burning alive.

But the Germans stood in a ring round the house and let no one pass through.

The entire family perished.

THREE DEATHS

The three were brought in from the forest, a man and two boys. In the village no one knew them. Only when they were being led out to be shot someone shouted:

"Why, its Vanya Ustinov, the woodman's son!"

Vanya went first. After him came his father and, at his side, dragged the youngest son, Vitya. The youngster's face was wet with tears and he cried:

"Mama! Mama!"

From time to time Vanya frowned at his small brother and held up his finger in warning.

They were shot with automatic rifles. Vitya fell instantaneously with his skull smashed to atoms. The father and elder son were still alive and the officer gave orders to finish them off.

For six days they lay in the snow. A board was driven into the ground nearby with the following inscription: "Shot as partisans."

The mother grew alarmed at the long absence of her husband and children, and came to Golovinki to make enquiries. The collective farmers told her that some partisans had been shot and their bodies were lying in the forest.

"What do I care about partisans? I am looking for my children."

All the same they took her to the spot.

"Are those they?" they enquired."

She did not answer, but stared at the corpses and then at the people with wild, wandering eyes. Then suddenly she turned and was gone.

Three deaths at once. It was too much for her. Her reason tottered. All day long she roams aimlessly about from corner to corner of the empty house. Then she goes out into the forest to search.

Her mind is a blank. She remembers only that once upon a time she had a husband and two sons. And she is looking for them day and night—looking, looking under every bush—in every hole. Sometimes it seems to her that she hears Vitya calling "Mama, mama." It is as though she had heard him call her for the last time when they shot him there on the slope.

SASHA TYSHKEVICH

On one of the collective farms in the Gomel district, near Zhlobino, German officers cruelly tortured and then murdered the whole family of the book-keeper Tyshkevich.

They rammed him, his mother, his wife, sister and two little daughters with their bayonets. The only member of the family who remained alive was the fourteen-year-old Sasha. He happened to be away at the time.

The mutilated corpses still lay about on the floor when Sasha returned home. He did not cry. He did not say a word to anyone. For a time he stood looking at the corpses, then turned and went away.

Some days later, the German army occupied Zhlobino. Long lines of tanks, armoured cars, artillery and infantry filed down the village streets.

A boy stood on the sidewalk. He watched the procession go by calmly and attentively.

When a large automobile came in sight with several Staff Officers in it, the boy ran forward and threw a hand grenade right into the machine. The explosion sent the machine flying sky high and killed all its occupants. The maddened fascists tore the body of the young hero to bits. He had been wounded when the grenade exploded. His name was Sasha Tyshkevich.

THESE FACTS ARE CORROBORATED BY PRISONERS OF WAR

Gottfried Jusif — Corporal, 7th Coy. 19th Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division writes:

"I consider that the treatment meted out to the civilian population by German troops is the height of villainy. Special requisition details are ordered to confiscate the last cow, the last sack of potatoes, from the people of the occupied areas. One woman, the mother of three children, refused to comply with their demands and was ruthlessly murdered. Children, irrespective of age or health, are thrown out into the cold, when the temperature is 40 degrees below zero.

"Can this really be the Germany of Schiller and Goethe?"

Johan Kovar—from Vienna, soldier of the 12th Coy. 482nd Infantry Regiment, writes:

"On July 16 we were sent for a short rest to a village about 40 kilometres from Zhitomir. In one house we found a woman in bed—dead. A second one was lying on the floor—also dead. There was a wounded girl there, but we were forbidden to bandage her wounds. She was slowly bleeding to death."

Helmuth Hoffmann, Corporal, 6th Battalion,
86th Artillery Regiment, 35th Rifle Division,
writes:

"We were resting on the second day after our battery had begun to march on Latvia. Suddenly we heard a revolver shot. At once everyone seized his rifle and began to fire at farmer's hut nearby. The farmer's family rushed to the cellar while the man himself jumped into a trench behind the house. Then our soldiers, led by Lieutenant Hoffmann, began an attack on the farm buildings. With his own hands the Lieutenant threw a grenade into the cellar where two women and a child had taken refuge. The child was killed outright and one woman came out wounded, with her hands up, begging for mercy. But she was greeted with two shots from an automatic rifle. She collapsed bleeding profusely, and badly injured. The second woman, who was still quite young, shot out her head, and she in turn was torn to pieces by machine-gun fire. Then a soldier flung a glass grenade at the man in the trench and he was burned alive. Finally, to crown it all, the whole settlement was burned to the ground."

M. SHKAPSKAYA



It Actually Happened